

Participants: Lou, Chris, Ed M. Rick Y. Steve G. Doug N. Robin F. Mark B. Dave B. Jim K. (both NRCS), others may have been on but did not announce themselves

1. Brief intro comments Lou and Chris, focus of telecon unique ID and paper sent around to address topic
2. Doug N. initiated comments by expressing concern about our perceived need to standardize unique id across themes. He believes this is not the case and should be left to the theme communities to decide
3. Mark B. and Steve G. provide summary of how the issue rose to this level as a result of road MAT meetings. Main issue from road MAT was that they did not want to follow a path that negatively impacted them down the road if some standard method was developed. Wanted to discuss before that happened. Steve indicated that it would be fine if left to the communities or themes to determine but that also needs to be given some boundaries so themes have a better id on how to proceed even if there is no single "permanent standard" developed.
4. Doug broke down issue into two main areas assignment of ID and modeling standard. He spoke to existing methods by which ids could be assigned and summarized his emails which outline the need for both an ID and authority source – what he also calls a "place name" which indicates the originator of the data – may not be the "authoritative source" of the data. He discussed a registry system or lookup where users/developers could gain info on data etc....
5. Mark B. had concerns about who would maintain such a service and Doug indicated that this has been a long standing need and discussion within the community and that FGDC is probably the appropriate keeper of such a service along with partners.
6. Dave B. expressed concern about the "added value" or duplicate datasets that abound and how it is very difficult to determine what data is the "official" of any one theme and hoped that GOS may address this in some way – maybe using this authoritative source ID method.
7. Lou asked if it would be good to have themes id the "authoritative source for data. Doug indicated that authoritative source and authoritative identifier are not the same and indicated that he prefers to use "name space" rather than "source".
8. Doug summarizes that in the hydro standard they have made an effort to outline delegations of authority of features and the like. He recommends other standards do the same and that this be outlined in Module 0 for guidance to all themes
9. Lou asked how and where do address issues of implementation. Doug responded that A – the scope of the standard is not to address or assign the ID. B – He does not believe there is any way we will be able to get standard ID across themes and that is a community effort C – we should not set policy on this but provide general boundaries on which themes can base the ID method.
10. Robin F. commented that something is needed to as guidance to the theme leads even if minimal. He said an example of how it was done by standard X would be ideal or provide them with starting blocks. Doug agreed this should be done.
11. Steve G. summarized discussion between Doug and Robin using the hydro standard as an example. He stated that in that case, the feature ID is captured, each theme outlines what populates that string and the theme would ideally use some intuitive string to populate ID authority. Doug agreed with this summary from Steve.
12. Doug followed with that comment that you want to capture in the ID both the UNIQUE and PERSISTENT information which is the authority and the identifier. Doug indicated that this is why the registration system is needed so that users have a method of quick look-up such as with GNIS with a short authority key.
13. Ed supported the development of an ID by each agency with general guidance as outlined above.
14. Doug stated that ID should be in parts not one whole. That is to say – separated by some known character etc so that software can pull the two entities apart when needed. Guidance should be in Module 0 on to provide support to all themes, identifier should be a character field etc.. not very specific so that themes can do what they need, and ensure they develop using separate fields that work together rather than one that can not be pulled apart.
15. Ed indicated that this is what he has done for the geodetic standard.
16. Steve G indicated that guidance will be needed since this will be tough to implement at the practical level – make sure guidance provided.

17. Dave B indicated that there may be cases where two authorities exist – how to handle. He used example of soils where there would be FIPS for the county and soils identifier. How would this be handled? Dave asked if this would be addressed in metadata.
18. Doug responded with the need to link or identify known identification schemes such as FIPS in each of the standards as appropriate but we probably do not want to go into depth just refer to.

CONCLUSIONS OF DISCUSSION

19. Lou asked if we agree that a standard cross theme unique ID is needed?
20. Doug responded that if “consistently modeled identifier scheme is used it will facilitate cross theme joins” and as a result the unique ID issue is not an issue.
21. Steve G. stated that each MAT should be encouraged to document in the standard what they have done and post to some known site to share with community. All on line agreed – or did not vocalize disagreement that this IS CRITICAL and should be provide as guidance to all MATS. THIS IS KEY TO HAVING A USEFUL PRODUCT.
22. Steve further indicated that each theme should define own scheme but not the cross theme ID.

Continuation of discussion on authority etc..

23. Mark B agreed with above but expressed concern about defining the authority within trans since there are so many players. He thinks this may be assuming a business process, which does not exist.
24. Robin/Mark/Steve/Doug revisited some of the issues discussed above to clarify for Mark.

CONCLUSIONS OF DISCUSSION

25. Lou asked if there was agreement on ID issue. Appears to be.
26. Lou asked if all agreed that it's a data exchange issue and model should include UID element and authority element.
27. Doug followed that there will be no intelligence in the identifiers but the authority is key. ID and authority together are critical, one absent the other is meaningless and will not facilitate joins with other datasets.
28. **Steve G. summarized as follows: Unique ID, authority and data type will be consistent across themes. MATS will define the contents of the fields as a community and document what is used to populated**
29. Steve G. stated that this must be documented so all use – this is critical – and that standards point to the other identifier docs they use so they are fresh, accurate and don't have to be included in standard doc. They are living docs. Both Mark and Doug agreed to this.
30. Doug followed with the comment that only the “carrier is universal and adaptive, and only the authority would be updated. The standard would not have to change id done as indicated above.
31. **Steve G. summarized how this works from the user perspective – implementation would have options such as attributing each segment or developing a related table, but to share the data the attributes are made part of the exchange set. Doug and Steve agreed that this is a very subtle and not apparent point but a critical one to capture.**
32. Doug agreed that this is a data exchange model not a model of data use or how used in a geodatabase. This is not intended to be a standard for data implementation or use.
33. Doug and Steve agreed that we need to doc the implementation and exchange differences and include in module 0.
34. Steve G. asked if some other word than authority could be used. Doug prefers Name space.

NEXT ACTIONS

35. Lou and Chris agreed to capture notes and send out to all
36. Mark B asked if we could discuss authority issues at the next telecon since there was much discussed today on the issue. All agreed. Mark and Steve will be unable to attend next week so authority was deferred to later date
37. Lou and Chris will ID topic for next week and develop one-pager to frame issue, will send out other cross cutting issues identified by Doug from hydro meeting and also resend paper by Steve that summarized issues.
38. Doug summarized issues related to “standard patterns” in UML modeling which is another issue to discuss.

Module 1 telecon #3 January 9, 2003
DRAFT notes captured by Chris Clarke

39. Next telecon January 16, 2003 at 1:00 PM.